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20 November 1964

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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DAILY BRIEF

South Vietnam: [Premier Huong is concerned over the opposition to his government, particularly from Buddhist circles.]

[Huong recently told Ambassador Taylor that he believed that General Khanh was maneuvering with the Buddhists against his government and felt sure that Thich Tam Chau and other Buddhist leaders had neutralist or even Communist backing. Huong indicated that he also considered the High National Council's new investigative subcommittee as primarily a device to keep criticism alive.]

[Buddhist leaders differ over the tactics they should pursue. Chau's faction in Saigon evidently is continuing to stimulate student pressure on Huong to revise his cabinet. Central Vietnamese leader Tri Quang expects the government to fall soon anyway, and his followers are planning ahead to influence the formation of a successor regime to Huong's.]

[Some of the Buddhists reportedly intend to press for early national assembly elections in secure urban areas where they are strong. Premier Huong told Taylor that, even though early establishment of a national assembly is essential, he strongly opposes popular elections. He is convinced that neutralists and Communists would exploit them.]

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Cyprus: [Turkish officials are again warning that war with Greece is possible.]

[A high Turkish General Staff officer recently expressed the view to the US Army attaché in Turkey that Ankara and Athens are on a collision course over the Cyprus issue. He warned that unless the Turkish demand for an independent, federal republic is accepted as a final solution, war would become inevitable.]

[The attaché also reports that some Turks are talking of retaking the Dodecanese Islands in retaliation for recent Greek actions on Cyprus.]

[Other Turkish officials, civilian as well as military, have repeatedly warned that war would follow either new attacks on the Turkish minority on Cyprus, or an attempt to effect a sudden union of the island with Greece. Short of such provocations, Ankara would be most unlikely to sanction an attack against Greece despite the armed services' deep frustration over the Cyprus issue.]

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DAILY BRIEF

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Italy: The concept of center-left government faces a critical test in the nationwide municipal elections on Sunday and Monday.

The elections will provide the first test of national political sentiment since the parliamentary balloting in April 1963 in which the Communists made substantial gains. The results will inevitably be interpreted as a plebiscite on the Moro government's performance to date.

If the Christian Democrats or the Socialists, the core of the present coalition, suffer unmanageable losses, a cabinet crisis probably could not be avoided for long. The Socialists are likely to lose considerable support because of defections to the Socialist splinter party and disenchantment over the lack of progress on reforms.

Losses appreciably in excess of half a million votes might lead the Socialists to believe that they have no alternative but to pull out of the government. Such a move, however, might be delayed until the party's national congress now planned for next February or March.

Some Italian leaders are hopeful that the Communist Party's showing will be hurt by recent events in Moscow. It is doubtful, however, that the Communists will lose much, if any, support as compared to their showing in the elections last year.

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Bolivia: The junta is slowly consolidating its position, but still has major problems with the miners and other important groups.

The hostility of the miners toward the government apparently caused junta president Barrientos to cancel a good-will trip to the Catavi-Siglo Viente mine complex last weekend. The miners in this area are controlled by Communists who are conducting a campaign to weaken confidence in the junta. On visits to several other mining centers Barrientos was received cordially, but without enthusiasm.

[Another worrisome matter is the poor response to an appeal by the junta for the surrender of all weapons held by civilians. Some arms have been recovered, but important groups such as the Communist Party, the miners, and former vice president Juan Lechin's National Leftist Revolutionary Party have said they will not comply.]

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NOTES

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Cuba: Castro's suspension yesterday of old-line Communist Major Joaquin Ordoqui from his party and government posts points up the continuing competition between "new" and "old" Communists in the regime. In the past, Castro has exploited this competition to maintain his own dominant position. Ordoqui, who was a leading Communist for almost thirty years before Castro came to power, was one of the few old party members to hold an important military position in the present regime.

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